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SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION, AUGUST 4-10: GUANTANAMO
DETAINEES, IRAQI GOVERNING COUNCIL, ABU MAZEN VISIT TO
KUWAIT, IRAQI-KUWAITI RELATIONS, CURRICULUM REFORM

[11.](#) SUMMARY: Kuwaiti officials reportedly postponed a scheduled trip by Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas to Kuwait this week over Palestinian "hesitation" to condemn the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. One commentator writes, "It is not acceptable to consider the occupation of Kuwait legitimate, while Israel's occupation of Palestine is illegitimate."

One liberal writer chastises Islamist MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaie for his statement published earlier in the week that US treatment of Guantanamo detainees is the same as that of Kuwaiti POWs at the hands of Saddam's regime. There is hopeful support for the Iraqi Governing Council, and derision for the Arab League and its refusal to recognize the Council or send troops as part of a stabilization force.

In a newspaper interview, an Assistant Undersecretary at the Ministry of Education denies foreign pressure for educational curriculum reform. One commentator feels Iraq and Kuwait share mutual economic interests beyond their "brotherly relations." END SUMMARY.

[12.](#) News Stories: On August 10, Al-Rai Al-Aam reports that Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas may begin a trip to Kuwait "soon" after resolving the issue of condemning the Iraqi invasion to Kuwait. Earlier in the week, all papers reported comments by Prime Minister Sheikh Sabab Al-Ahmad that a proposed visit by Abbas was postponed over Palestinian hesitation to apologize for their support of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

All papers report "anti-Kuwait riots" in southern Iraq in which Kuwaiti vehicles were attacked amid allegations of Kuwaiti smuggling of Iraqi oil.

Al-Qabas published an interview on August 10 with Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Ms. Noriyah Al-Subeih in which she strongly denies that there is "foreign pressure" to change the Kuwaiti curriculum, and that "some Muslims have a wrong interpretation of Jihad" which leads to extremism.

Al-Qabas reports that according to an Iraqi newspaper, Kuwait has agreed to forgive 75% of Iraq Airways debt, estimated at US\$600 million, and to present two commercial planes to the airlines once approval is received from the Iraqi Interim Governing Council.

Editorials:

[13.](#) "The Most Courageous Decision for Sabab Al-Ahmad" Abdelamir Al-Turki wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (8/10): "When Kuwait asks the Palestinian Authority to apologize for its support of the Iraqi invasion in 1990, it is in fact supporting the Palestinian Authority and its people who are suffering under the Israeli occupation. This is how the Kuwaiti position must be understood. We demand an apology from the Palestinian Authority. [I]t is not acceptable to consider the occupation of Kuwait legitimate, while Israel's occupation of Palestine is illegitimate. This is the core of rejecting the visit of Abu Mazen to Kuwait."

[14.](#) "The POWs Belong to Al-Qaeda- They Are Not Ours" Liberal Abdellatif Al-Duaij wrote in independent Al-Qabas (8/6): "Whether we like it or not, it remains the responsibility of the Kuwaiti government to work for the release of the Kuwaiti detainees at Guantanamo. However, many people still insist that they are our POWs while in fact, they are the POWs of the Al-Qaeda organization. They cannot be considered on the same level with our POWs in Iraq."

[15.](#) "MP Waleed, You Should Not Say That" Talal Al-Arab wrote in independent Al-Qabas (8/10): "MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaie accused America, the closest ally to

Kuwait, of treating the detainees in Guantanamo as Saddam treated our POWs in Iraq. As far as I have heard, our detainees in Guantanamo have the right to practice their religion, get medical treatment and will receive some money upon their release. As for Saddam, the fate of the prisoners was execution in cold blood. We sympathize with the detainees in Guantanamo and we wish that the US would offer them fair trial, or just release them, but at the same time, we do not blame America for detaining them. What brought those people to Afghanistan? Were they doing charity work.?"

16. "The Difference is in the Method"

Bader Bin Issa wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (8/10):
"America's determination to continue the detention of 650 human beings in Guantanamo, treating them in an inhumane way for over one and a half years. without any legitimate accusation, is similar to what Saddam Hussein did with Kuwaiti POWs. Saddam executed Kuwaiti POWs without putting them on trial, and as for the US, it will execute them after they are put on trial. The result is the same, but method is different."

17. Abdelmohsen Jamal wrote in independent Al-Qabas (8/7):
"The formation of the Iraqi Transitional Ruling Council will prepare the Iraqis to deal with their new reality and eventually accept the outcome of any democratic elections. Although it seems to be difficult for some Arab political regimes to understand this scenario. the Transitional Ruling Council is the best way to deal with the complicated reality that currently prevails in Iraq."

18. Saleh Al-Shayji wrote in independent Al-Anba (8/10):
"Arabs who objected to the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 are the same people who are objecting to sending Arab peace forces to maintain peace in Iraq. The Arab League, influenced by a group of assassins and supporters of Saddam, refused to recognize the Transitional Ruling Council in Iraq or to send Arab peacekeeping forces to Iraq. Iraqis should confront the Arab League because it does not deserve any respect."

19. Saud Al-Samaka wrote in independent Al-Qabas (8/9):
"Iraq and the Iraqi people are lucky that the Arab League refused to send Arab troops to Iraq. This will ensure that Iraq is not infected by Arab security methods which are based on stripping the dignity from humans."

110. "What Does Washington Want From Riyadh?"
Waleed Al-Ahamd wrote in independent Al-Anba' (8/4):
"President Bush realizes that there is no proof behind these accusations [of Saudi government support of the 9/11 terrorists] but he cannot express his opinion freely without deferring to the American policymakers who guarantee the security of Israel."

111. "Not Just Brotherly Relations"
Former Secretary General of the Kuwait Democratic Forum Ahmad Al-Dayeen wrote in independent Al-Rai Al-Aam (8/5):
"Iraq has and still needs Kuwait as a naval port and as a commercial and financial center. Likewise, Kuwait needs Iraq because oil will not remain a source of income indefinitely, requiring Kuwait to assume a role as a commercial and financial center in the region. There are common strategic needs that will influence future relations between the two countries."

JONES